

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 OPIC-03 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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DEPT PASS OPIC AND AID/NESA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EINV, TS, US

SUBJ: AYARI INVESTMENT PROMOTION VISIT TO U.S.

REF: TUNIS 7350

SUMMARY. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS IMPORTANT THAT AYARI VISIT TO US RESULT IN TANGIBLE INTEREST BY US FIRMS IN INVESTING IN TUNISIA. IN ADDITION TO SUPPORTING SUGGESTION RE MODIFICATION OF TENTATIVE AYARI SCHEDULE TO INCLUDE MORE TIME FOR BUSINESS CONTACTS, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT FIRMS TO BE CONTACTED BE INFORMED IN ADVANCE ON TUNISIA. EMBASSY ALSO HOPES PREPARE AYARI FOR TYPE OF QUESTIONS HE MAY ENCOUNTER AND IS STRESSING NEED THAT WHOEVER ACCOMPANIES HIM SPEAKS ENGLISH. END SUMMARY.

1. DIRECTOR OF PROMOTION HICHERI OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCY (API) INFORMED EMBOFF THAT TUNISIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON AND MINISTRY OF PLAN HAVE WORKED OUT FOLLOWING TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR VISIT BY MINISTER OF PLAN AYARI TO US IN JANUARY:

JAN. 9 - MEET WITH DAVID ROCKEFELLER AND OTHER CHASE MANHATTAN BANK OFFICIALS AND CLIENTS IN NEW YORK.

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JAN. 10-11 - CONTINUE MEETINGS WITH BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES

IN NEW YORK.

JAN. 12 (SUNDAY) - OPEN

JAN. 13 - GIVE SPEECH OR LECTURE AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.

JAN. 14, 15, 16 - VISIT CHICAGO AND SAN FRANCISCO FOR
DISCUSSIONS WITH BUSINESS FIRMS THAT MIGHT BE INTERESTED
IN INVESTING IN TUNISIA.

JAN. 17-21 - HOLD MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS OF US GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES (PARTICULARLY AID AND STATE DEPT.) AND WORLD
BANK GROUP.

JAN. 22- (DATE NOT CERTAIN, POSSIBLE 25TH) - MEET WITH OPIC
AND POTENTIAL US INVESTORS IN WASHINGTON.

AYARI WILL BE ACCCOMPANIED DURING VISITS WITH POTENTIAL
AMERICAN INVESTORS BY KHALED CHAABOUNI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
GENERAL OF API.

2. AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBOFF, HICHERI BELIEVES THAT
THREE DAYS IS TOO SHORT FOR USEFUL INVESTMENT PROMOTION IN
CHICAGO AND SAN FRANCISCO AND IS SUGGESTING TO MINISTRY OF
PLAN THAT VISIT SHOULD BE EXTENDED BY AT LEAST ONE DAY TO
PERMIT TWO DAYS IN EACH CITY. HE IS ALSO SUGGESTING THAT,
RATHER THAN MEET BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON
AFTER JAN. 21, AYARI ARRANGE FULL DAY PROGRAM IN ATLANTA
THROUGH JAN. 24.

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY ATTACHES IMPORTANCE TO AYARI VISIT AND
HOPES IT WILL SUCCEED IN GENERATING TANGIBLE AND SUSTAINED
INTEREST IN INVESTMENT IN TUNISIA ON PART OF AT LEAST A FEW
OF US FIRMS CONTACTED DURING AYARI'S TOUR. AS US AID
DECLINES, GOT IS STRIVING TO EXPAND AMERICAN INVESTMENT HERE
AS ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF OBTAINING TRANSFER OF US TECHNOLOGY
AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS AND CAPITAL. WE BELIEVE SUCH
INVESTMENT IS DESIRABLE ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC GROUNDS
AND CAN EXPAND ENTRY OF US EXPORTS INTO EC AND OTHER
COUNTRIES WITH WHICH TUNISIA HAS TRADE AGREEMENTS.

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4. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. EMBASSY SUPPORTS HICHERI SUGGESTIONS RE EXTENSION
OF AYARI TRIP TO CHICAGO AND SF AND TRIP TO ATLANTA (OR
POSSIBLY HOUSTON) AFTER JAN. 21 AND BELIEVES OPIC OR STATE DEPT.
SHOULD DISCUSS THIS DIRECTLY WITH TUNISIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON.
UNLESS SPECIAL PROGRAM BEING PLANNED TO BRING INTERESTED

COMPANIES TO WASHINGTON FOR TALKS WITH AYARI, CONTACT WITH LABOR INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES IN US SOUTH COULD BE VERY USEFUL FOR TUNISIA.

B. SINCE AYARI TENDS TO BE SOMEWHAT PROFESSORIAL AND TO TALK IN GENERALITIES, WE BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO ARE MAKING PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIS MEETINGS SHOULD PROVIDE AS MUCH ADVANCE INFORMATION ON TUNISIA AS POSSIBLE TO FIRMS HE WILL MEET AND ATTEMPT ASSURE THAT FIRMS WITH GENUINE INTEREST IN TUNISIA WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS THEIR INTEREST WITH AYARI AND WITH WHOEVER ACCOMPANIES HIM. WHILE GENERAL MEETINGS TO GIVE AYARI OPPORTUNITY TO EXPOSE ADVANTAGES OF INVESTING IN TUNISIA TO BUSINESS GATHERING MAY CREATE PUBLICITY, WE BELIEVE IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAT VISIT ADVANCE SPECIFIC INVESTMENT INTERESTS IN TUNISIA BY US COMPANIES. CONTACT WITH FIRMS ALREADY INVESTIGATING POSSIBLE PROJECTS HERE OR WHO WILL JOIN TIMAN MISSION IN FEBRUARY MIGHT HELP ASSURE TANGIBLE RESULTS FROM AYARI VISIT.

C. WHILE CHAABOUNI IS WELL INFORMED ON QUESTIONS WHICH COULD INTEREST POTENTIAL US INVESTORS, HIS LIMITED ENGLISH WOULD REDUCE HIS USEFULNESS DURING VISIT. EMBASSY IS TACTFULLY SUGGESTING TO AYARI THAT HE SHOULD CONSIDER BRINGING ONE OR POSSIBLY TWO OFFICIALS FROM API OR MINISTRY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY WHO ARE FLUENT IN ENGLISH AND FULLY BRIEFED ON PRACTICAL PROBLEMS THAT COULD BE FACED BY AMERICAN INVESTORS. DEPT./OPIC MAY ALSO WISH DISCUSS WITH TUNISIAN EMBASSY.

D. IN HELPING PREPARE AYARI AND WHOEVER WILL ACCOMPANY HIM FOR VISIT, WE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE HIM LIST OF TYPICAL QUESTIONS WHICH US INVESTORS WITH A GENUINE INTEREST IN TUNISIA MIGHT RAISE. WOULD APPRECIATE IF OPIC COULD AIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POUCH SOONEST MATERIAL WHICH MR. BIRD WAS TO HAVE BROUGHT TO TUNIS IN NOVEMBER (PARA 9 STATE 234028) AND WHICH WAS DISCUSSED WITH CARL MIDDLETON OF OPIC DURING HIS VISIT.
SEELYE

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